

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T CAIRO 05536

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR PORG UNSC ET SO EG
SUBJECT: HORN OF AFRICA

REF: (A) CAIRO 5485, (B) CAIRO 5450, (C) STATE 44072

1. FOR PAST 36 HOURS ACTING FONMIN BOUTROS GHALI HAS BEEN TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH PALESTINIAN TERRORIST ATTACK IN NICOSIA AND SUBSEQUENT EGYPTIAN ABORTIVE COMMANDO RAID ON CYPRUS AIRWAYS AIRCRAFT AT LARNACA. IN TELECON THIS MORNING, HE APOLOGISED THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN IN TOUCH WITH ME AGAIN FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE UNSC RESOLUTION ON THE HORN OF AFRICA, BUT SAID HE WOULD DO SO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE DEPARTED THIS MORNING FOR CYPRUS TO CONDUCT NEGOTIATIONS FOR RELEASE OF CAPTURED EGYPTIAN COMMANDOS.

2. IN MEETING WITH MFA UNDERSEC USAMA AL BAZ TODAY, HE NOTED THAT SOMALI FONMIN ABDUL RAHMAN JAMA BARRE HAD LEFT YESTERDAY EVENING FOR TRIPOLI CONFERENCE AFTER TWO DAYS IN CAIRO. ACCORDING AL BAZ (WHO IS NOT ALWAYS THE
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MOST RELIABLE SOURCE), SOMALI FONMIN HAD MADE FIVE POINTS:

-- SOMALI GOVERNMENT WOULD LIKE TO GET OUT OF OGADEN WITH LEAST DAMAGE TO ITS FORCES AND PRESTIGE. IT WOULD LIKE TO FIND SOME WAY TO "MITIGATE THE RISK OF WITHDRAWAL." ASKED IF BARRE HAD SPECIFICALLY INDICATED

SOMALI WILLINGNESS TO WITHDRAW FROM OGADEN, AL BAZ SAID
"MORE OR LESS" SO.

-- SOMALIA WOULD LIKE SOME KIND OF A GUARANTEE AGAINST
THE POSSIBILITY OF REPRISALS AND ATROCITIES AGAINST THE
OGADENIS. FONMIN BARRE HAD CLAIMED THAT IN THOSE AREAS
ALREADY SEIZED BY THE ETHIOPIANS, THE LATTER ARE CON-
DUCTING WHOLESALE MASSACRES OF THE ETHNIC SOMALI POPULA-
TION. BARRE BELIEVES ETHIOPIAN INTENTION IS TO CHANGE
THE DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE OF THE OGADEN AREA AND THAT,
UNLESS SOME ASSURANCES AGAINST REPRISALS CAN BE OBTAINED
(FOR WHATEVER THEY ARE WORTH), THE ETHIOPIANS WILL
MASSACRE THE ETHNIC SOMALI ELEMENTS OF ANY TERRITORIES THEY
RECOVER. (AL BAZ STATED GOE CANNOT VOUCH FOR SOMALI
CHARGE MASSACRES ARE ALREADY TAKING PLACE.)

-- SOMALIA WANTS ASSURANCES THAT THE SOVIETS AND THE
CUBANS WILL NOT CONTINUE TO WORK AGAINST PRESIDENT SIAM
BARRE. FONMIN BARRE EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THE ETHIOPIAN/
SOVIET/CUBAN INTENTION IS TO SEEK WAYS AND MEANS OF
GETTING RID OF PRESIDENT SIAD BARRE.

-- SOMALIA WOULD LIKE SOME KIND OF "ARRANGEMENT" IN
OGADEN WHICH WILL ALLOW A TYPE OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR
THE INHABITANTS. AL BAZ CLAIMED FONMIN BARRE WAS NOT AS
"FANATIC" ON THIS POINT AS SOMALIS HAVE BEEN BEFORE.
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-- SOMALIA IS OPPOSED TO PROPOSED UNSC ACTION ON GROUNDS
THAT THE CONCEPT OF SELF-DETERMINATION MENTIONED IN DRAFT
"ELEMENTS" OF A RESOLUTION IS NO MORE THAN A REITERA-
TION OF THE ETHIOPIAN CONCEPT OF AUTONOMY WITHIN
ETHIOPIA. FONMIN BARRE HAD DRAWN THE ANALOGY OF BEGIN'S
"SELF-RULE" PLAN FOR THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.

3. FONMIN BARRE HAD ALSO STATED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT IS
SCEPTICAL OF A UNSC RESOLUTION SINCE IT HAS NO ASSURANCE
THAT USG WILL USE ITS LEVERAGE ON THE SOVIETS TO WITH-
DRAW THEIR TROOPS. IN THE ABSENCE OF SUCH AN ASSURANCE,
THE SOMALIS CONSIDER THE RISK OF WITHDRAWAL TO BE TOO
GREAT.

4. ASKED WHAT FONMIN BARRE HAD REQUESTED OF GOE, AL BAZ
STATED THE SOMALIS WOULD LIKE EGYPTIAN MILITARY ASSIS-
TANCE IN THE FORM OF TROOPS, AIRCRAFT OR WHATEVER EGYPT
IS WILLING TO SEND TO PROTECT THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE
OGADEN. THIS, AL BAZ STATED, GOE IS UNABLE TO DO AND
BARRE HAD BEEN SO INFORMED.

5. RE PARA 2, REF C, AMBASSADOR RAISED WITH AL BAZ THE DESIRABILITY THAT EGYPTIAN DELEGATION TO OAU CONFERENCE IN TRIPOLI TRY TO PREVENT ANY EFFORT TO PRESS A RESOLUTION PUSHING UNSC INVOLVEMENT IN THE HORN. AL BAZ CLAIMED EGYPTIAN DELEGATION HAS BEEN INSTRUCTED TO TRY TO PLAY A "CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE" AND TO URGE THAT NO POSSIBLE OPTIONS BE EXCLUDED THAT MIGHT HELP RESOLVE THE HORN OF AFRICA PROBLEM. EILTS

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